

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

October 2019 – January 2020



Meetings 10:30am-11:30am

Meetings Free for Levin JCC members and \$3 for guests

October 11th

Radium Girls Kate Moore

The Curies' newly discovered element of radium makes gleaming headlines across the nation as the fresh face of beauty, and wonder drug of the medical community. From body lotion to tonic water, the popular new element shines bright in the otherwise dark years of the First World War. Meanwhile, hundreds of girls toil amidst the glowing dust of the radium-dial factories. The glittering chemical covers their bodies from head to toe; they light up the night like industrious fireflies. With such a coveted job, these "shining girls" are the luckiest alive — until they begin to fall mysteriously ill. But the factories that once offered golden opportunities are now ignoring all claims of the gruesome side effects, and the women's cries of corruption.

November 8th

Snow Falling on Cedars David Guterson

San Pedro Island, north of Puget Sound, is a place so isolated that no one who lives there can afford to make enemies. But in 1954 a local fisherman is found suspiciously drowned, and a Japanese American named Kabuo Miyamoto is charged with his murder. In the course of the ensuing trial, it becomes clear that what is at stake is more than a man's guilt. For on San Pedro, memory grows as thickly as cedar trees and the fields of ripe strawberries—memories of a charmed love affair between a white boy and the Japanese girl who grew up to become Kabuo's wife; memories of land desired, paid for, and lost. Above all, San Pedro is haunted by the memory of what happened to its Japanese residents during World War II, when an entire community was sent into exile while its neighbors watched.

December 13th

The Parnas Silvano Arieti

The Parnas recreates the final days of Giuseppe Pardo Roques, the lay leader, or parnas, of the Sephardic Jewish community of Pisa, Italy, who was killed in his home by the Nazis in August, 1944. Pardo was a mentor to the author, and, indeed, he was a figure adored and celebrated not only by the Jews of Pisa but by the Christians as well. He was learned and generous, but he was also profoundly phobic.

In *The Parnas*, Arieti imagines what took place in the home, and in the mind, of this devout, kindly, and tormented man in the last days of his life, providing, in the process, an overview of Italian Jewry. Arieti hopes to show "that tragic times have a perfume of their own, and smiles of hope, and traces of charm, and offer olive branches and late warnings that may not be too late."

January 10th

Where the Crawdads Sing Delia Owens

For years, rumors of the "Marsh Girl" have haunted Barkley Cove, a quiet town on the North Carolina coast. So in late 1969, when handsome Chase Andrews is found dead, the locals immediately suspect Kya Clark, the so-called Marsh Girl. But Kya is not what they say. Sensitive and intelligent, she has survived for years alone in the marsh that she calls home, finding friends in the gulls and lessons in the sand. Then the time comes when she yearns to be touched and loved. When two young men from town become intrigued by her wild beauty, Kya opens herself to a new life—until the unthinkable happens. Perfect for fans of Barbara Kingsolver and Karen Russell, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is at once an exquisite ode to the natural world, a heartbreaking coming-of-age story, and a surprising tale of possible murder.